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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
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Charles S. Taylor

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LAW OFFICE OF ALAN W. CANNON
942 MESA OAK COURT
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EXAMINER

BUI, VY Q

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

3773

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PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary	Application No. 09/480,826	Applicant(s) TAYLOR ET AL.	
	Examiner Vy Q. Bui	Art Unit 3773	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 10 May 2010.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-3, 5-8, 14, 26, 29 and 163 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 4, 9-13, 15, 19-23 and 26 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☒ Claim(s) 1-3 is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 5-8, 14, 16 and 29 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 27, 28, 30 and 31 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application |
| Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION***Election/Restrictions***

Applicant explicitly elected of the invention as shown in Fig. 33, species 15, claims 1-3, 5-8, 14, 16 without traverse in the reply filed on 10/20/20/2008 (page 2). Paper 10/22/2008 (page 2) also clearly admitted that claim 5 is generic to claim 9 and claim 14 is generic to claims 15 and 19. The Applicant did not assert that claims 9, 15 and 19 read on elected species as shown in Fig. 33. Therefore, withdrawal of claims 9, 15 and 19 from further consideration is proper. When the generic independent claims 5 and 14 are allowed, dependent claims 9, 15 and 19 will be rejoined.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102/103

The text of those sections of Title 35, U.S. Code not included in this action can be found in a prior Office action.

1. Claims 5-8, 14, 16, 29 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by or, in the alternative, under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as obvious over Jensen-3,572,326.

1.1. As to claims 5-7, 8, Jensen-'326 (Fig. 1-2, 4) discloses a frame defined by elements 18 & 19 & 20 & 22 & 23 & 24 & 33 & 42, 1st blade/arm 49 coupled to frame element 42 and 2nd opposed blade/arm 47 coupled to the frame element 33, 2nd blade movable toward or away 1st blade along 1st lateral axis defined by arm 47, hexagonal head of arm 47 as an actuator for moving 2nd blade toward or away from 1st blade, wherein hexagonal head of arm 47 can be rotated and push or pull to convert a rotational movement to a translational driving force

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as recited in claim 5, foot 48 rotatably coupled to frame element 33 via coupling 56 and coupling 56 locks or free a relative rotation between foot 48 and frame element 33 as recited in the claim. Please notice that for claim 5, coupling 56 (F. 1, 4) meets the limitation “said coupling permitting rotation of said foot with respect to said at least one of the frame and first and second blades in one direction, and preventing rotation of said foot with respect to said at least one of said frame and the first and second blades in an opposite direction”, because when coupling 56 is in an unlock condition, at least one can rotate foot 48 in one direction, and then lock the rotation by coupling 56 to prevent rotation of foot 48 at least in an opposite direction. Notice that claim 5 only requires that coupling 56 is capable of allowing a rotation of foot 48 in one direction and locking foot 48 of rotation in an opposite direction.

1.2. Alternatively, as to claims 5 and 8, F. 1 of Jensen-‘326 shows frame/elongate bar 33, 1st blade/arm 46 and 2nd opposed blade/arm 47 being mounted to the elongate 33 by rotatable connector 56, hexagonal head of arm 46 as an actuator for moving 2nd blade toward or away from 1st blade along 1st axis defined by elongate bar 33, foot 48 rotatably coupled to frame element/elongate bar 33 via coupling 56 and coupling 56 locks or frees a relative rotation between foot 48 and frame element/elongate bar 33 as recited in the claim

1.3. As to claim 6, foot 48 is linearly movable to frame element 33 along an axis defined by arm 48.

1.4. As to claims 5-8, notice that 1st blade 49 and 2nd blade 47 each includes a curved section/arcuate throat and a tip section/elongated vane section. Please, see 1st blade (connecting to arm 49) having a curved-hand shaped with curved section and 4 fingers/vanes as shown in F. 1 of Jensen-‘326.

1.5. Alternatively, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to provide a retractor blade with a curved section/arcuate throat and vanes/extended tip sections

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as recited in the claims as this configuration would provide the blade to function as a hook to receive and keep the rib in place during a surgery procedure. It is well within level of an ordinary skill in the art to provide the blade as recited in the claims as this configuration of the blade involves only minor modification or design of a common used blade in the art.

In another alternative, it is well known to configure a rib retractor to have an elongate vane and a curved throat to receive and keep a rib in place during a surgery operation. For example, a blade as shown in F. 6 of Forder-4,344,420 includes arcuate throat and elongated vane substantially as recited in the claims. In view of Forder-'420, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to configure Jensen-'326 blade to have an arcuate throat and elongated vane as recited in the claims.

1.6. As to claim 14, Jensen-'326 (Fig. 1-2, 4) discloses elongate member 33, 1st arm/blade 46, 2nd arm/blade combination 47 having hexagonal head 67 (F 3) as an actuator, element 60/61 as a drive member, and elements 64/65/66 and 58/59/60 as a drive mechanism, to drive said 2nd blade toward or from 1st blade, shoe 48 having element 55 with a support surface to engage a patient's chest, locking member 56 or 64 (Fig. 4) allowing or locking a rotation between 2nd blade and elongate member 33 substantially as recited in the claim. Please notice that when element 35 is positioned at a position higher than that of element 34, one can translate locking member 56 together with 2nd arm/blade 47 away from 1st arm/blade 46 toward element 35 to rotate said 2nd arm/blade 47 relative to elongate member 33 and lift a rib because in an unlocking condition, locking member 56 (F. 4) allows a rotation as well as a translation of 2nd arm/blade 47 relative to elongate member 33. Therefore, at least Jensen-'326 device is capable of performing the function as recited in the claims.

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1.7. As to claim ~~16~~, shoe 48 is coupled to 2nd blade 47 via elongate locking member 56 and elongate member 33. A rotation of elongate 33 will rotate shoe 48 and 2nd blade 47 together.

1.8. As to claim ~~29~~, Jensen-'326 (Fig. 1-2, 4) discloses frame 33/42, 1st arm/blade 46 or 49, 2nd arm/blade combination 47 having hexagonal head 67 (F 3) as an actuator, element 60/61 as a drive member, and elements 64/65/66 and 58/59/60 as a drive mechanism, to drive said 2nd blade toward or from 1st blade, shoe / foot 48 having element 55 with a support surface to engage a patient's chest, locking member 56 or 64 (Fig. 4) allowing or locking a rotation between 2nd blade and elongate member 33, foot 48 having a coupling 56 (F 3) substantially as recited in the claim.

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 1-3 are allowed.

Claims 27, 28, 30 and 31 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Response to Arguments

As to claim 5, the claim does not exclude the case when knob 67 is rotated about frame 33 to cause a translation movement of the rib (lifting the rib for example).

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The finality of the previous office action has been withdrawn and this "Office Action" is made non-final for the Applicant to respond to the rejections as indicated in the present office action.

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Vy Q. Bui whose telephone number is 571-272-4692. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Tuesday and Thursday-Friday.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Jackie Ho can be reached on 571-272-4696. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/Vy Q. Bui/
Primary Examiner, Art Unit 3773